

HOW OPIUM SMUGGLERS BAFFLE THE SECRET SERVICE TO BRING IN THEIR DEATH DRUG



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The recent seizure of 59 tons of opium by government agents in the hold of the Pacific mail steamer Manchuria at San Francisco shows the limit to which opium smugglers will go to bring the drug into this country. Their persistence and ingenuity are baffling.

Opium has been concealed on board ships by Chinese sailors in the most inconceivable places. At one time a government officer walking along the deck, stumbled against a large tackle block used apparently on the boom with a heavy hawser for unloading cargo. It was about 18 inches in diameter and 3 inches thick. Ordinarily it would have weighed 300 pounds. To his surprise, it rolled over. He found it to be made of tin, formed like a block and painted. It was hollow and filled with opium.

Another time an inspector located a "fake" drain pipe among other pipes. It seemed a part of the ship's fittings, but it proved to be a receptacle for opium, and might easily have been taken ashore.

One of the best planned attempts to smuggle in a large quantity of opium took place in a large mail steamer. The drug had been sealed up in steel tanks about as large as a barrel, and these were introduced in the fresh water vats. One inspector, with more curiosity than the rest, happened to look there and found it.

Officers employed in this work naturally become most skilled in detecting secret places. They go into every part of the ship to look for the stuff. They even climb between the ribs of the boat. They put on their